

**ic** inteligencias  
colectivas  
[karachi]

ZOOHAUS

#inteligencias colectivas

#inteligencias colectivas [**karachi**]

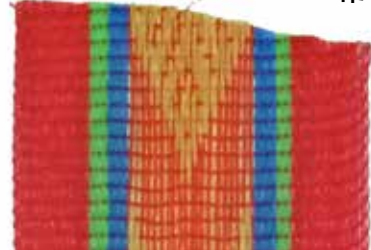
#jewels [**catalog**]

#darwin meets karachi [**upgrade**]

#jugaad [**prototyping**]

#pakistan chowk

#guilds&markets [**humannetwork**]



# Inteligencias Colectivas

Every region of the world has its own repertoire of construction techniques. The coexistence of different degrees of industrialization and development allows for the mixing of semi-industrial products with old and enduring techniques; however, they are only considered valid in informal environments. While many of these construction solutions lack proper design planning, they generate a wide range of procedures through popular and generational wisdom. Few standardized products exhibit such great improvisation.

Inteligencias Colectivas draws its inspiration in part from this very ethos. Rooted in real-life examples of intelligent construction, this online platform and free database brings together knowledge considered to be on the fringe of traditional construction practice. This methodology is used in order to promote a type of technical know-how that is at once inclusive and public. A horizontal learning system — through tinkering with material prototypes — helps to weave together a tight network of people and collectives.





**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA RED LIMA**  
CCELIMA  
SEPTIEMBRE 2012

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA RED MANAGUA**  
CCEMANAGUA  
OCTUBRE 2012

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA LIMA**  
UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA ESCUELAB FABLAB  
08/XI/2010 - 19/XII/2010

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA SANTIAGO**  
C.C.E. SANTIAGO DE CHILE  
23/XI/2010 - 26/XI/2010

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA CHILE**  
F.A.U. UNIV. CHILE  
29/XI/2010 - 10/XII/2010

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA PALOMINO**  
UNIVERSIDAD JAVERIANA DE BOGOTÁ  
2010 -

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA 2.0 [estación ecológica las malvinas]**  
MINISTERIO M.AMBIENTE UNIBE  
IX/2011 - XII/2011

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA SANTO DOMINGO**  
C.C.E. SANTO DOMINGO UNIBE  
11/VII/2011 - 30/VII/2011

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA MEDELLÍN**  
VII BIAU REDES LOCALES  
8/X/2010 - 18/X/2010

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA BOGOTÁ**  
CONSEJERÍA CULTURAL DE ESPAÑA EN COLOMBIA  
22/XI/2010 - 26/XI/2010

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA MONTEVIDEO**  
UNIVERSIDAD DE LA REPÚBLICA  
13/XII/2010 - 17/XII/2010

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA S. AIRES**  
06/XII/2010 - 10/XII/2010

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA OFFFFICINA**  
PROGRAMA EL RANCHITO MATADERO - MADRID  
VIII/2011 - XII/2011

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA BILBO**  
CAÓSTICA  
XII/2011

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA OIZ EGIN**  
SEPTIEMBRE 2012 - JUNIO 2013

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA SÁHARA**  
MINISTERIO M.AMBIENTE FESTIVAL FISAHARA  
2011 - 2012

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA RED BATA**  
CCEBATA  
FEBRERO 2013

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA RED MALABO**  
CCEMALABO  
FEBRERO 2013

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA BUDAPEST**  
MOHOLY-NAGY  
1/VI/2011 - 10/VI/2011

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA DONOSTIA**  
UNIVERSIDAD DEL PAÍS VASCO  
1/III/2011 - 10/III/2011

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA PAKISTÁN**  
OCTUBRE 2016

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA TAIWAN**  
JULIO 2013

**INTELIGENCIA COLECTIVA SEÚL**  
MAYO 2015

B

After 20 days in Karachi in which we discovered nearly 60 amazing objects (a term we use for non-standardized intelligent constructions), met more than 200 people, designed and built an urban structure using local techniques in collaboration with Marvi Mazhar and her team, engaging a human network of more than 30 people, we were still far away from knowing Karachi in all its complexity. However, for us Karachi is a city full of jewels.

*Karachi is naan bakers, pomegranate juice stands, motorbike covers, kites, steel handmade tools and all kinds of cook and chill in public space.*

Moving around Karachi with open eyes and as close to what was happening around us (other than walking, our preferred means of transportation was the rickshaw), we perceived from the very first second the city's strong manufacturing character and the Pakistani way of doing things "better done than perfect" with unexpected intelligent design solutions that solve specific problems and are determined by the materials and technologies available at the time. Recycling is a leitmotiv in Karachi.

What happens when these intelligent design solutions for everyday problems are shared and replicated again and again all around the city? The result is a city where the amount of different kinds of trolleys, bikes, canopies, street kitchens etc. becomes infinite.

As object, types these solutions shape the perception and use of public space. Every user customizes objects for his/her own purpose, creating a diverse family of the same object. The families of objects are made by different people who specialize in a certain trade and usually live and work in a certain neighborhood typical for their field of work, thus creating markets and commercial areas where the products on sale are built in backyard workshops. Streets full of nothing but car parts lead to streets full of textile products or food, rerouting needs and demands, influencing the urban landscape and peoples' movement around the city to the point of rendering sidewalks irrelevant.

The systems of urban objects and bottom-up infrastructure (trash collectors, goods delivery, transportation) are in fact the cornerstones of urban behavior in the city. Urbanism in Karachi is handmade, built by objects and manufactures.

**“RUKKO,  
RUKKO,  
RUKKO”**

(common expression heard during our rickshaw safari research around the city)

**“Why should we import it if we can make it”**



**“Sidewalks? Of course, but maybe...”**

(common expression heard during our rickshaw safari research around the city)

**jewels [catalog]**

Inteligencias Colectivas (IC) is about developing an online researching tool to categorize and taxonomize intelligent urban solutions concerning informal knowledge, citizen agreements, citizen-experts and non-driven urban processes. We are uploading and sharing them under Creative Commons licenses.

## URBAN EVIDENCE CATEGORIES



### TECHNOLOGIES AND MATERIALS

**TECHNOLOGIES AND MATERIALS**  
Emerging constructive details, specific self-made objects, tools or infrastructures, hybrid construction techniques, popular inventions and other interesting adapted innovations understanding also innovation in the way urban life is developed where what's important is not something material but the way it's used, shared or interceded.



### WORKING COMMUNITIES

**WORKING COMMUNITIES**  
In many societies around the globe they flourish working communities that create their own jobs and guilds. This communities are often on the verge of the law but there are always a perfect socioeconomic description of how a city, a country and even a continent works. In a globalized world these communities hold a lot of expertise in hybriding both western and traditional knowledge.



### URBAN OPPORTUNITY

**URBAN OPPORTUNITY**  
Places to reclaim or underused and could be useful to hold certain activities or fully working spaces with specific political situation that could be reprogrammed under new urban rules for a much better purpose. It's very important to map them and measure their potential.



### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

**MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**  
Learning from local "Tactical urbanism" as a way of understanding city-living and city-making by the study of their internal, sometimes tacit, pacts between citizens. These are able to manage and reprogramme public spaces under rules that are not written but agreed. Another way of doing 'urban planning' from which actual planners can learn a lot for a more livable and agile city.



### HUMAN NETWORK

**HUMAN NETWORK**  
Living repositories of all this wisdom. Necessary consultants to understand techniques or culture. An interconnected grid of urban specialist that must be enrolled in every project.

## SPECIAL SEALS

These are applicable to categorized Evidence in order to understand some specific features concerning their materials, legal agreements, replicability, etc.



To indicate that an 'Evidence' its made from reused material or assembling other objects into a new one.



Evidence on the verge of legality or alegal. Normally responding to lack of available standard rules or solutions.



When you can find the same solution as a part of a 'family' in the same city or in another country or even continent.



When you catalogue a unique 'Evidence'.





### [Manual Baling Paper Press]

**Location:** Back street, Abdullah Haroon Rd.

**Dimensions:** 120 x 60 x 120 cm approx.

**Technology:** Wood, Nails and iron joins

**Intelligence:** Trash manufacture in city center

All over the city of Karachi (especially early in the morning) you can find people collecting plastic, cans or paper. This is not new. But we were almost shocked to find a paper and cardboard press 50m away from a main street in Karachi. The operation couldn't be simpler: after putting the cardboard inside, two people move a turning lever that moves the top piece through a gear, pressing the material. The best part of the invention is not the technology involved but its presence in the city center.



### [Beam Attachment]

**Location:** Karachi, Pakistan

**Dimensions:** 10 x 15 x 3 cm approx.

**Technology:** Iron work

**Intelligence:** A way to hang (literally) objects from a beam structure

Two folded iron strips pressed by a bolt hang over the wings of the concrete beam. It is a creative solution to solve the problem how to attach something to a massive concrete element.





## [Shopping Extension]



**Location:** Lee Market, Paper Area, Karachi

**Dimensions:** 160 x 60 x 75 cm approx.

**Technology:** Steel work

**Intelligence:** Expand commercial area without effort. Taking advantage of the presence of a flight of stairs to transform it into usable space

The owner of this paper shop attached a railway to the steps in front of his shop. The railway is made by welded steel UPN that serves as a guide for the wheels attached to the stand. This allows to place the 60cm stand over the stairs during working hours. These kinds of shops are approx. 2.20 x 4m so it becomes a huge gain of inner space. At closing time the owner moves the stand inside and the railways stay in the stairs, secured from theft by their bottom attachment.



## [Ready-Made Anchor]



**Location:** Ibrahim Hideri, Karachi

**Dimensions:** 30 x 60 x 30 cm approx.

**Technology:** Steel Work

**Intelligence:** An object made out of simple materials

Once you see it is easy to imagine but we have never before seen an anchor made of steel bars and plates. It is made out of one single material and three or four different pieces that can be manufactured using a forge and a welder. Simple and clever.



## [Awning & Canopies]



**Location:** Pakistan

**Dimensions:** Variable

**Technology:** tensioned fabrics, rope, bamboo

**Intelligence:** Simple and refined details of tensile structure

It is common in Karachi to install small or medium sized awnings to shade shop fronts, restaurant terraces, political or religious meetings and mobile commerce units like trolleys. In some dense areas like bazaars it becomes a main part of the urban landscape. Since this is a cheap technology everybody adapts it and finds creative solutions for joins, anchorages, drainage... Over time successful solutions are copied. The result is an extremely refined and simple construction solution.



## [Bamboo Ladders & Scaffolds]



**Location:** Karachi, Pakistan

**Dimensions:** Variable

**Technology:** Bamboo, hemp rope, wood battens

**Intelligence:** Local supplied material. Simple construction technology

As a local product, bamboo is widely used as construction material in Pakistan. Unfortunately it is perceived as a "poor" material and we only could find examples of its use in scaffolds and ladders. However it is still interesting to learn about how easily a very light ladder up to 6 or 8 meters can be built. The bamboo is carved and wood battens as rungs are inserted. For scaffoldings 10 to 14 feet (3 to 4.5 m) long bamboo pieces and 2-3 feet of hemp rope are used. Bamboo is usually dried and its surface treated (against insects) before using it as construction material.



## [Charpai]

**Location:** Indian subcontinent

**Dimensions:** Usually 3 x 6 feet approx.

**Technology:** Netting

**Intelligence:** Extension of commercial area without effort

The charpai, which is used for sleeping and doubles up as a daybed, is said to be 5,000 years old. However, the handmade charpai, with its simple structure, is indigenous to the Indian Subcontinent. Traditionally they were built with wood and cotton but these days you can find steel frames and acrylic colorful fabric used for netting. Surprisingly there is not so much information in the internet about this amazing object besides hundreds of decoration sites that announce and sell it at crazy high prices. However on youtube you can find videos about how it is made.



## [Foundations]

**Location:** Karachi, Pakistan

**Dimensions:** Variable

**Technology:** -

**Intelligence:** Low-cost and easy to make foundations

A kind of detail that is commonly found in contemporary vernacular architecture. Cities are full of all kinds of containers that eventually can be filled with concrete to serve as foundation. Something interesting about this kind of construction solution is that it has no scale; that means that you can find it from XS to XXXL size depending on what it used to contain. Most used materials are paint cans and tires.



## [Trolleys]

**Location:** Karachi, Pakistan

**Dimensions:** 4 x 6 x 3 m approx.

**Technology:** wood and steel work

**Intelligence:** mobile shopping stand

Around the city you find many different types of trolleys selling goods, food, juices... but almost all of them have the same structure. The frame is made using steel flat bars that are bent and twisted. Two pairs of ribs receive the wheels. Using four ribs instead of two allows each wheel to move independently. Over this frame a wood board made out of cheap wood battens is placed. Starting with this simple structure each owner can add parts to adapt the trolley to his own needs.



## [Mobility Extension]

**Location:** South Asia

**Dimensions:** 3 x 4" wooden battens

**Technology:** Wood work

**Intelligence:** Pickup basic tuning that allows further extensions

A simple addition to every single pickup made out of a 5x10cm wood batten to the edge of the rear car body and gate. The wood makes it easy to install nails and other small metal pieces that can hold ropes or fabrics over the car load. It serves also as seat and foundation on which rear bumpers and lateral fences are installed. It usually shows plenty of decoration that makes the vehicle unique.







## [Fire in public space]



**Location:** Pakistan  
**Dimensions:** Variable  
**Technology:** Mostly steel work  
**Intelligence:** Regulation of fire in public spaces for private uses

Barbecues, bread ovens, metal forges, heaters... fire is present in Karachi streets. Barbecues and forges are usually built in welded steel structures that also hold fans and cooking supplies, umbrellas, light bulbs... Barbecues are light and portable structures that are moved daily in and out of the shops when not in use. Some of them are also equipped with wheels to become some kind of trolleys.



## [Truck Art Guilds]



**Location:** Karachi, Pakistan  
**Dimensions:** -  
**Technology:** -  
**Intelligence:** Cluster of workshops and economy of scale

In Pakistan trucks are profusely decorated. It gives the owner a kind of status. The most popular part of this truck art is painting but there is a whole guild around it. Hornets, bumpers, garlands, complete interior refurbishment, reflectors, and even complete new structural parts of the trucks like cabins and tanks are made in the same area. This kind of proximity is also useful in terms of communication and transport of goods. Guilds also provide a place in the city for activities and people know where to go when they need any kind of services or goods.



## [Beauty City]



**Location:** Karachi, Pakistan  
**Dimensions:** -  
**Technology:** Painting, wood and steel work  
**Intelligence:** Beauty as a sign of proud and identity

From our foreigner perspective Karachi is a proud and elegant city. We detected a very strong cultural feeling of beauty and uniqueness. Everybody tries to transform their properties into something unique. Normally people have very limited resources but that doesn't stop them in their pursuit. Cars, motorcycles, tracks, facades, windows and even their beards and their mustaches are pushed to show their uniqueness and beauty.



## [Ibrahim Hideri]



**Location:** Ibrahim Hideri, Karachi, Pakistan  
**Dimensions:** -  
**Technology:** -  
**Intelligence:** Cluster of workshops and commerce related with the same target market

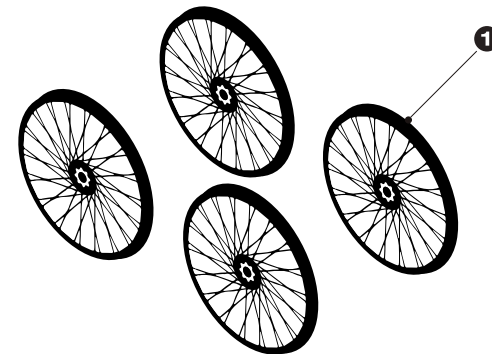
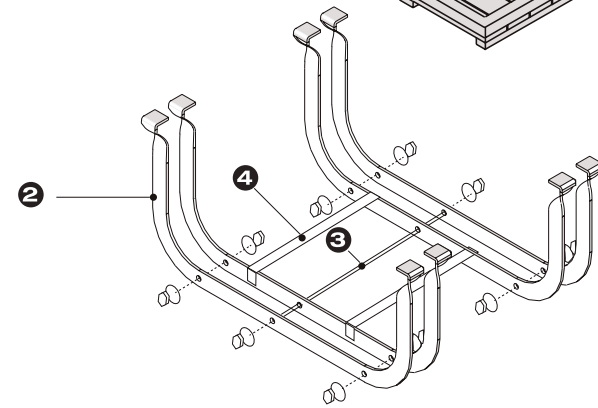
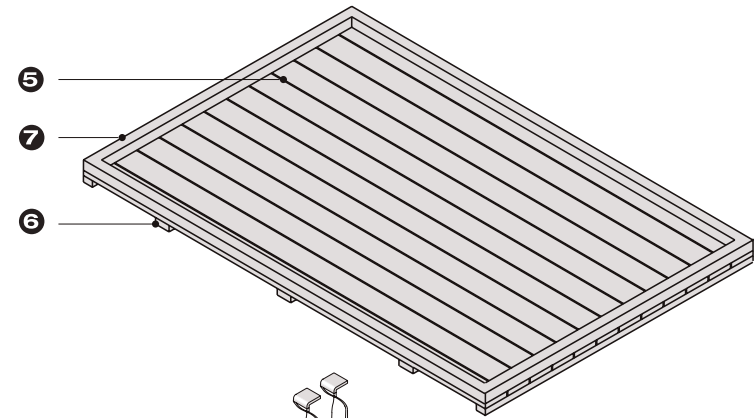
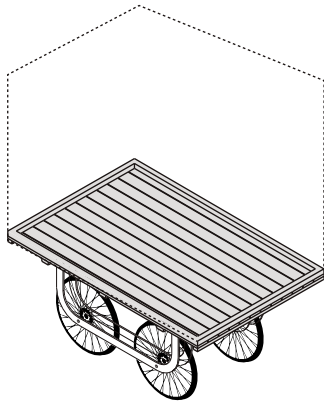
Ibrahim Hideri homes the fisherman guild within all kind of goods and services related with boat construction and supplies. They make and sell every single part of a boat: from anchors with welded steel bars, and aluminium components using sand casting molds to wood or fiberglass handcrafted boats. They only need from the customer the total length and width that the boat should have. According to that they build the keel and the central rib. Then they build the external shape with slim and flexible wood boards. The natural wood curvature gives the shape of the boat.

## darwin meets karachi [upgrade]

Around the city you find many different types of trolleys selling goods, food, juices... but almost all of them have the same structure. The frame is made using steel flat bars that are bent and twisted. Two pairs of ribs receive the wheels. Using four ribs instead of two allows each wheel to move independently. Over this frame a wood board made out of cheap wood battens is placed. Starting with this simple structure each owner can add parts to adapt the trolley to his own needs.

The upgrades allow us to take a deeper look at some of the objects found in the research. The objects are measured and explained from their manufacturing process. The objective pursued is twofold: on the one hand to allow the informal knowledge that treasures the object to be codified as a technique. On the other hand this form of cataloging allows the object to be replicable in contexts different from the original.





### Axonometría General

- ❶ 22" bike wheel
- ❷ 6 feet long Iron plate ( 1/2 x 2 ") bent in both extremes to recieve wood frame
- ❸ Threaded steel rod
- ❹ 1/2 x 2" Iron plate working as inter-axle reinforcement
- ❺ 1 x 3" pine wood battens
- ❻ 1 x 2" wooden crosspiece
- ❼ 1 x 1" wooden edge frame







## jugaad [prototyping]

Planning and building critical constructions (“prototypes”) from an assortment of evolved “jewels” found in Karachi, in collaboration with know-how local agents, becomes an equal and equitable design methodology for cultural exchange.

These prototypes are centered on architectural and urban planning techniques that combine conventional know-how with present-day needs. Many materials - recycled, semi-industrialized, crafted and manufactured - are integrated into such customized constructions. These solutions need to be incorporated into the building process as a way to make longstanding social traditions and our ever-changing built environment commensurable.



24J

(Citar en Marvi studio)

- 7 ~~Desayuno~~
- 10 Visita a Marvi studio
- 12 Visita al lugar → contratista

13:30h Contratista cemento

15h Visita metalista

o llamada  
 Los tiempos de producción  
 (definir n.º de piezas y longitud para pedir material)

CONSULTAR TIEMPOS Y DISPONIBILIDAD MATERIAL (Sahana)

- 2 Definición de cimentación (preguntar qui más debajo no se vaya a hundir)
- definición de anclaje de postes

¿Y si ponemos tanto metal que no se pueda mover? si se puede ir de

25V

Comienzan obras de Zapatas

Visita a obra y replanteo

Entrega de planos de postes

Encargados los metales!!! (hemos hecho samples de los 2)

Llevar las cosas al ilustrador de contables

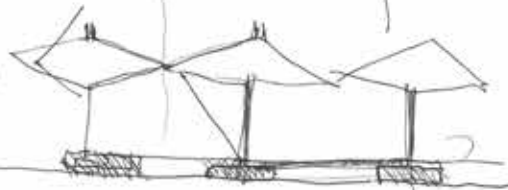
Nuestros deberes ↓

Definición de Postes

Definición de umbrales

¿Banco?

2



Fotos: metalistas / obra / pint.

26S

Entrega de planos de sombra

Ejecución de Zapatas

13h Pillar SIM cant. Queda con el artista

14h Controla metales

16h Tarjetas

17h Queda con artista

14

13h Bega Ali

TONI MANERO EN MARVI'S warmth M- Address: C81 Block 2 Karachi.

21h

Diston

D 27

Preparación de Lahore

¿Ir fotos folios por hacer?

Pintar.

Pensar diseñar charpoy.

Contemporary dance

13h Bega Ali

L 28

Ejecución de postes

Ejecución de Sombras entallas

Ejecución madera

1 [lecheja pintados]

Compras tornillos

Taladro

1- ¿¿¿¿¿ andamios o escalera (2) de tijera

Ejecutar con zapata inferior

o vidrios

1- ¿¿¿¿¿ on site - Charpoy on site

- Painter.

M 29

Ubicación de Sombras

Ejecución de madera

1- Colocación lechejas

Compras tornillos

Taladro

1- ¿¿¿¿¿ andamios o escalera (2) de tijera

Ejecutar con zapata inferior

o vidrios

1- ¿¿¿¿¿ on site - Charpoy on site

- Painter.

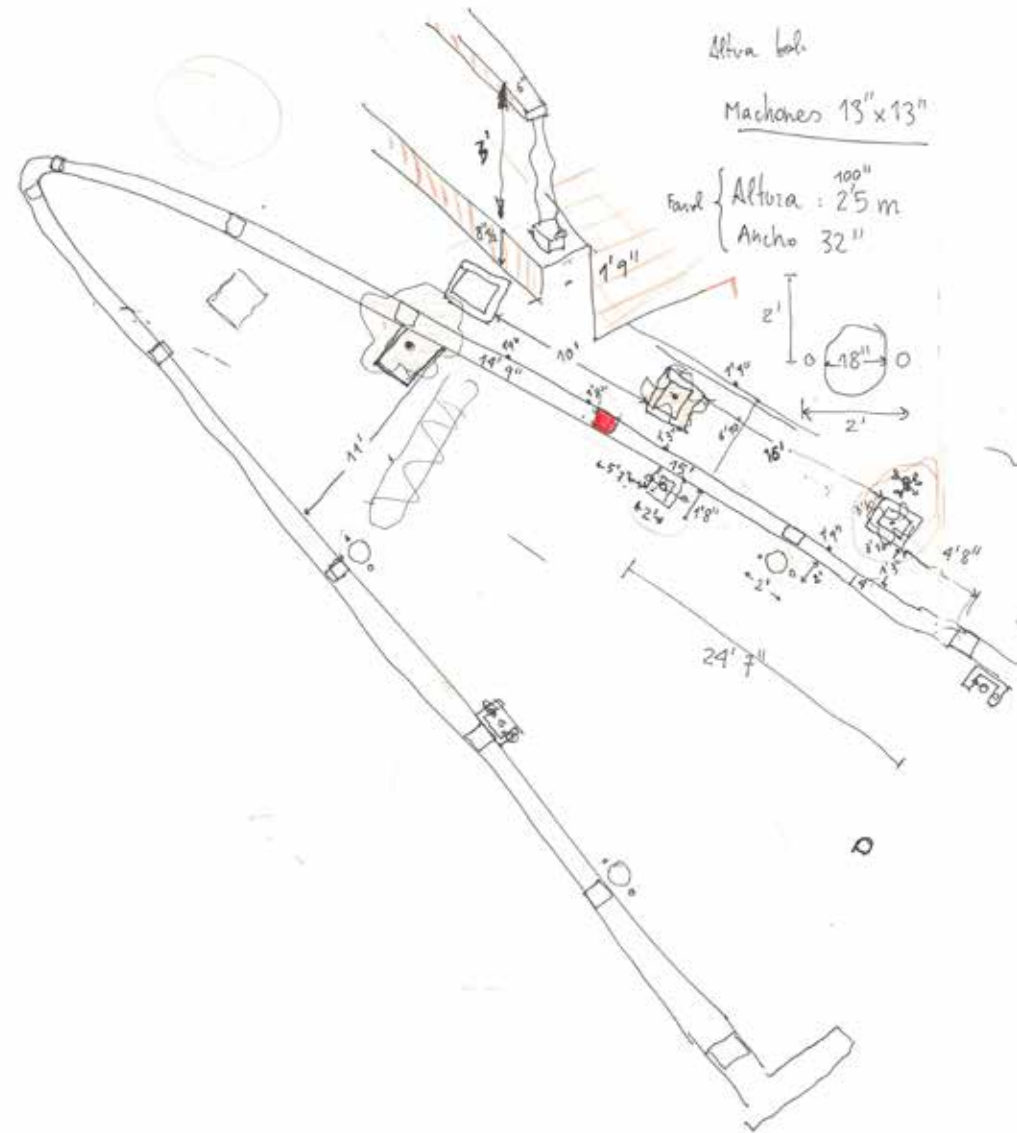
Cualquier cita de placer entre 17h y 21h

J 30



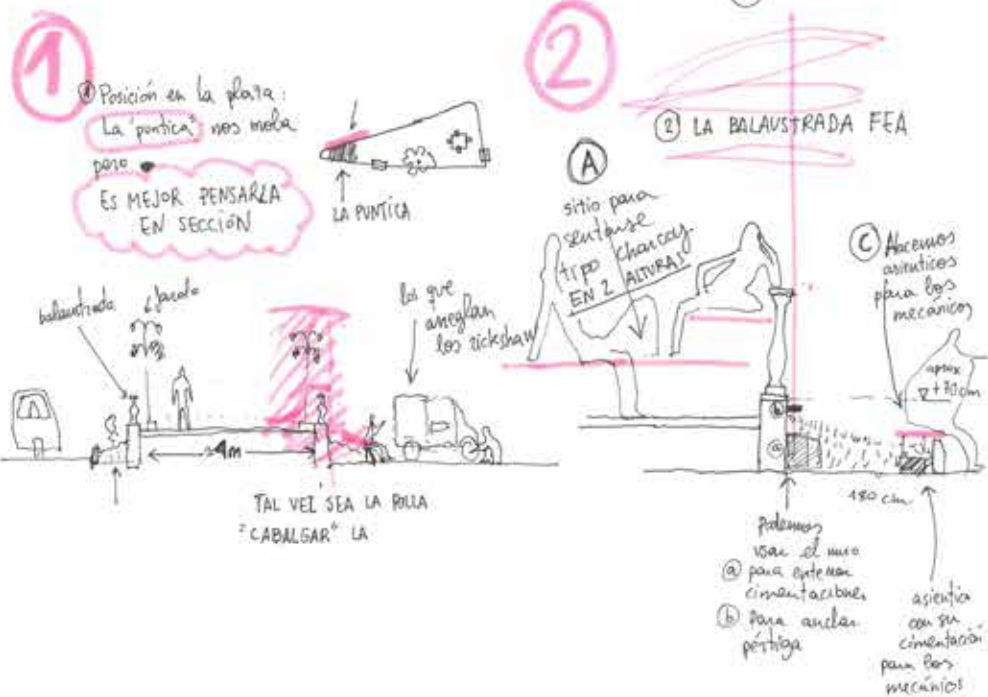
- 1 Madera / andamios.
- 2 Charpoy
- 3 Taladro y tornillos.





CATEGORIAS SEOUL <sup>→ OPENNESS</sup>

- ① URBAN GUILDS & MARKETS
- ② MOBILE UNITS → Transporting Goods  
→ Recyclers COLLECTING  
→ Itinerant business
- ③ FOOD SOVEREIGNTY
- ④ BACKSTAGE URBANISM.



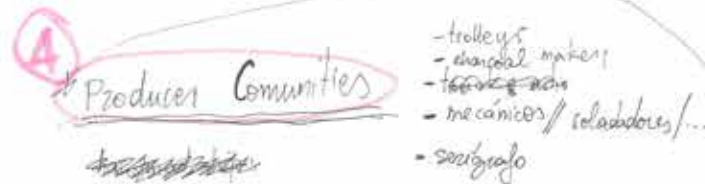
Cosas de segunda  
adela  
Artillo

192°  
1080

Firma en la construcción y uso de materiales  
simplicidad

→ Bamboo

→ charpoy  
Brensa de

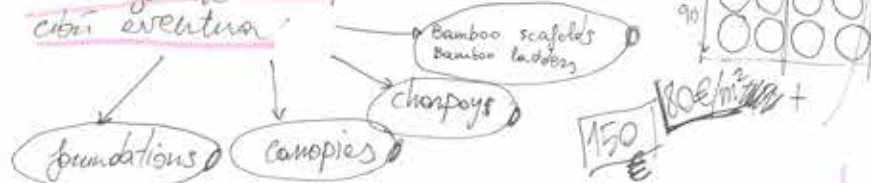


Peso ~~de~~ gran descubrimiento es que ~~son clusters~~ son CLUSTERS !!



③ Detalles que separan esta forma de ocupar el espacio

⑥ La ciudad por CLUSTER COMMUNITIES



Firma en detalles

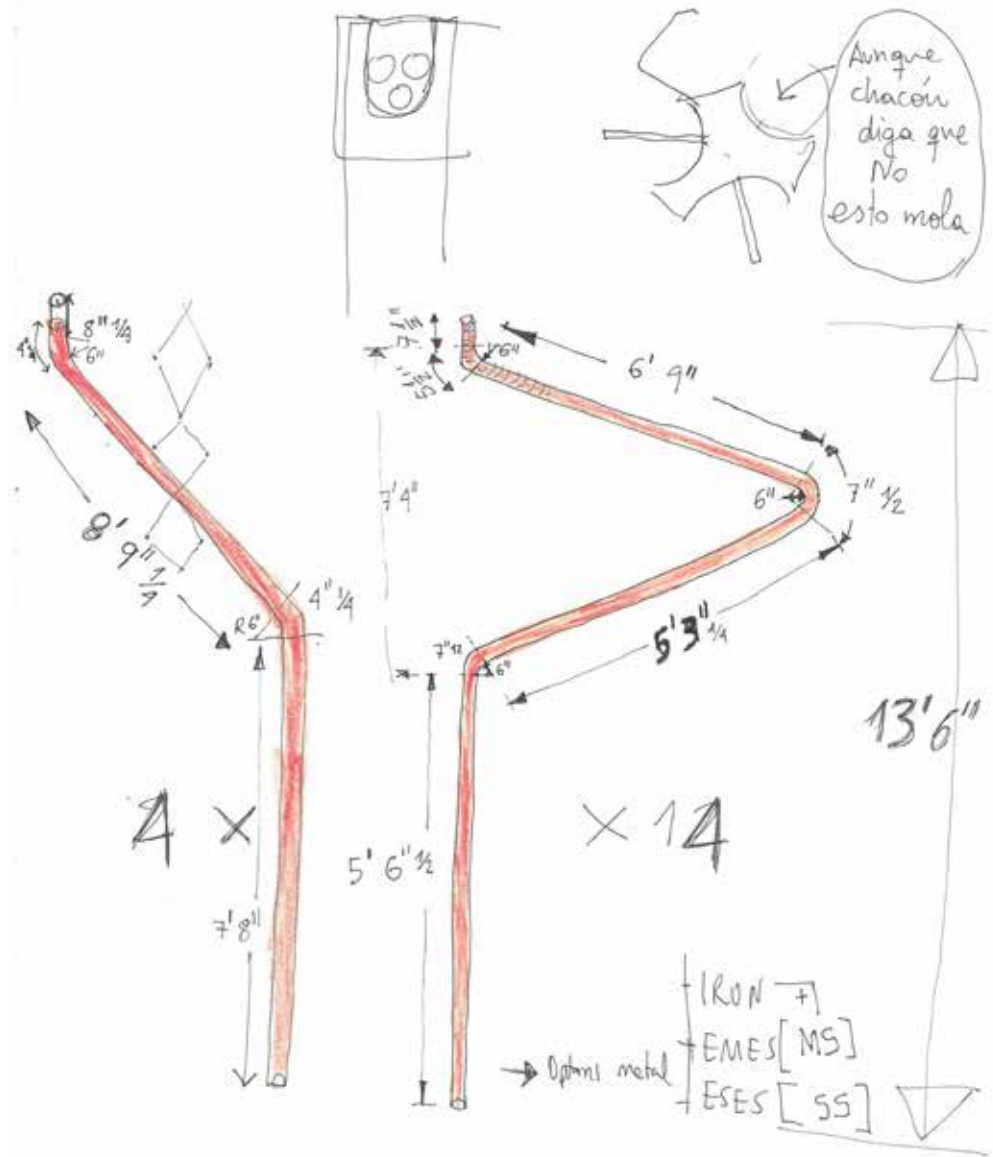
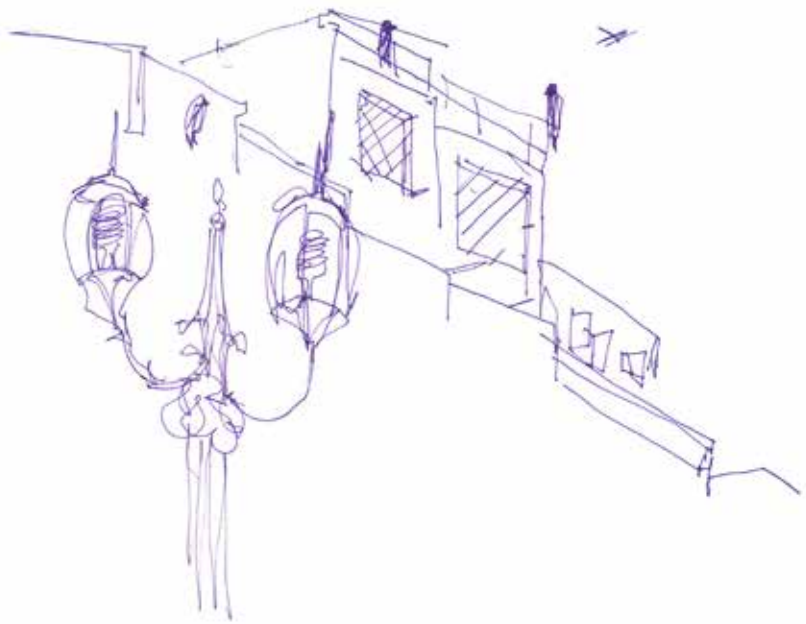
- asiento amortiguado
- somisa
- enganche de ventilador

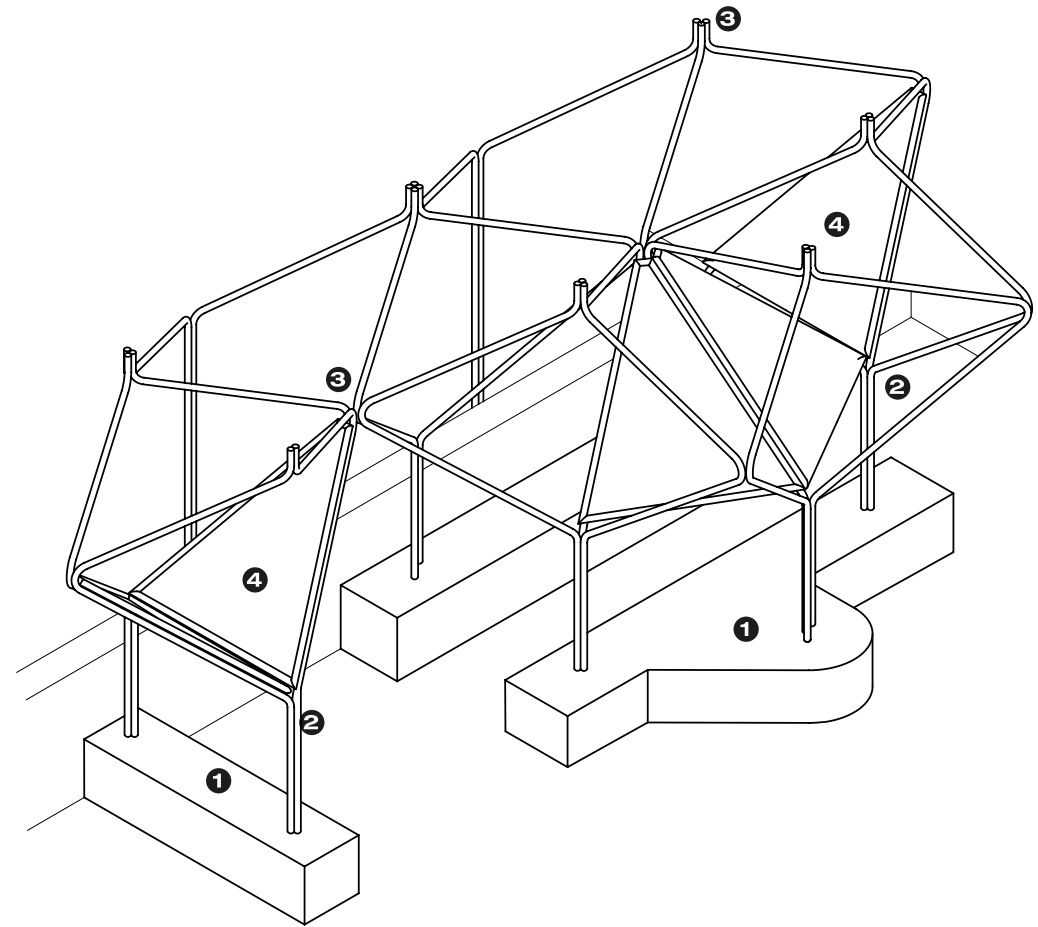
with deadgods

why import if we can make it?

En Alemania se hacen muchas cosas porque venden muchas piezas / tornillos / charpoy / ...

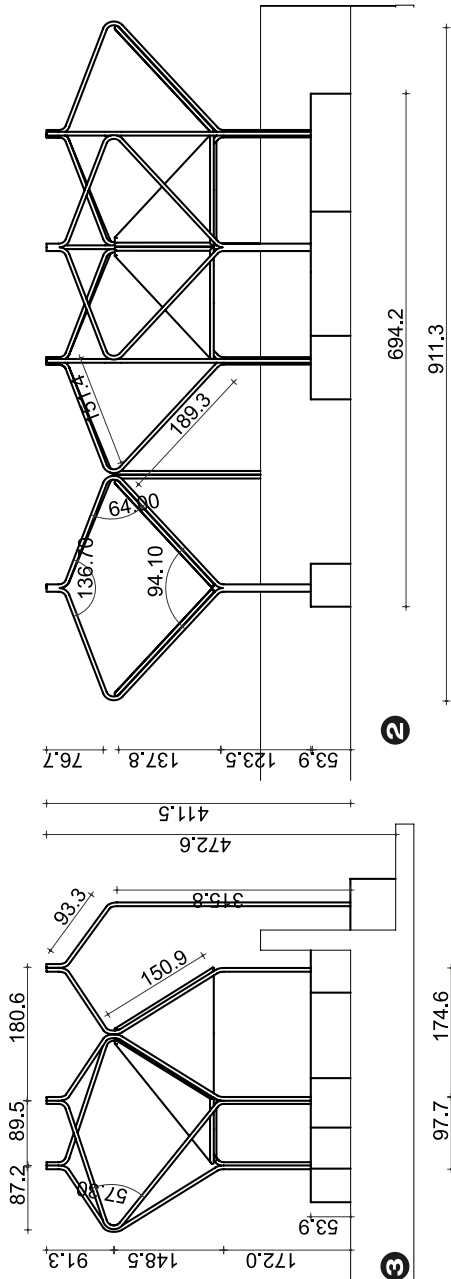
Aquí se hacen muchas cosas kg los productores son recursos





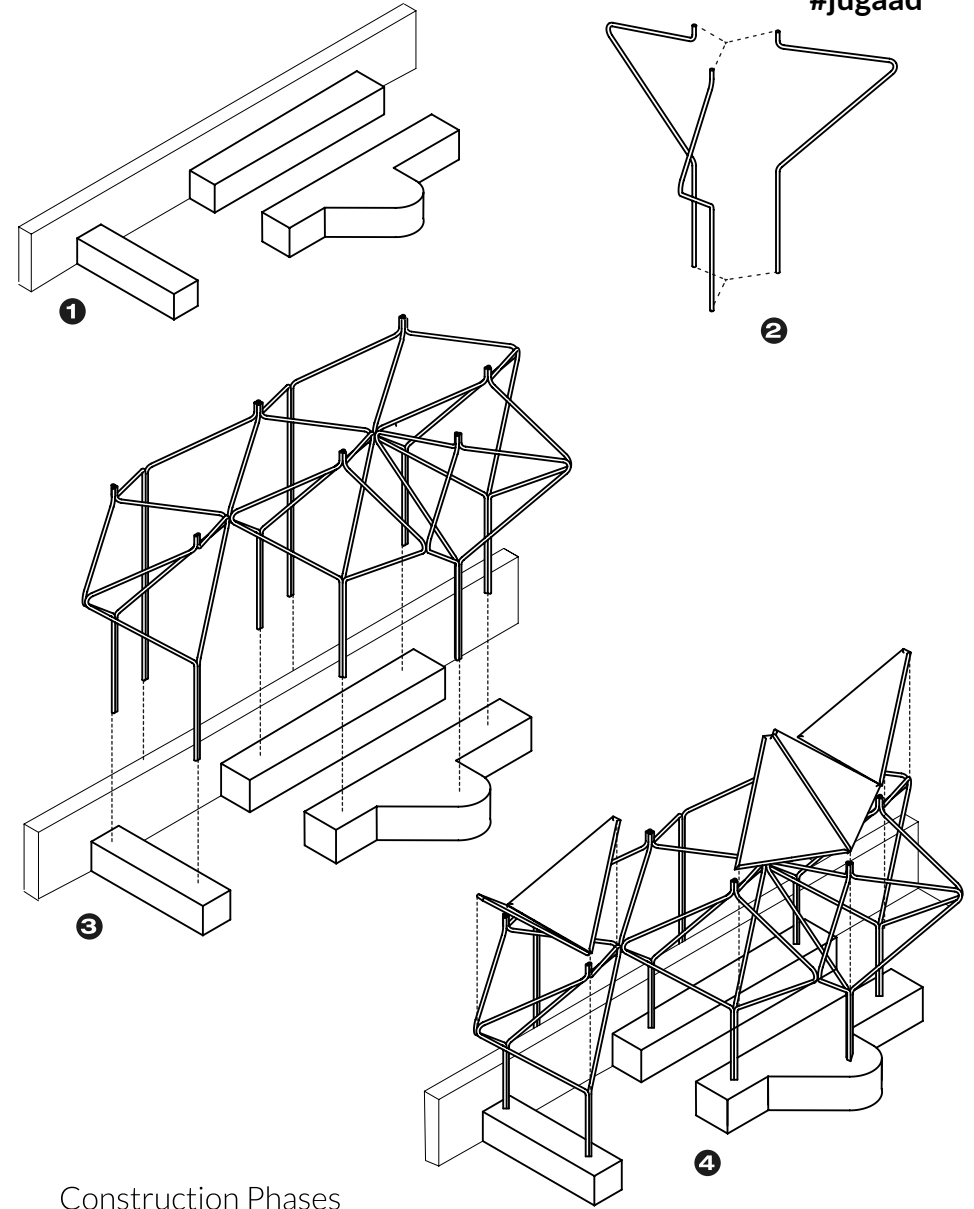
### General Perspective

- ❶ Foundations: Handcrafted Concrete Benches
- ❷ Structures of Bent Metal Pipe
- ❸ Reused Tires Joints
- ❹ Charpai Canopy



Plans and Dimensions

- 1 Floorplan
- 2 Elevation South
- 3 Elevation East



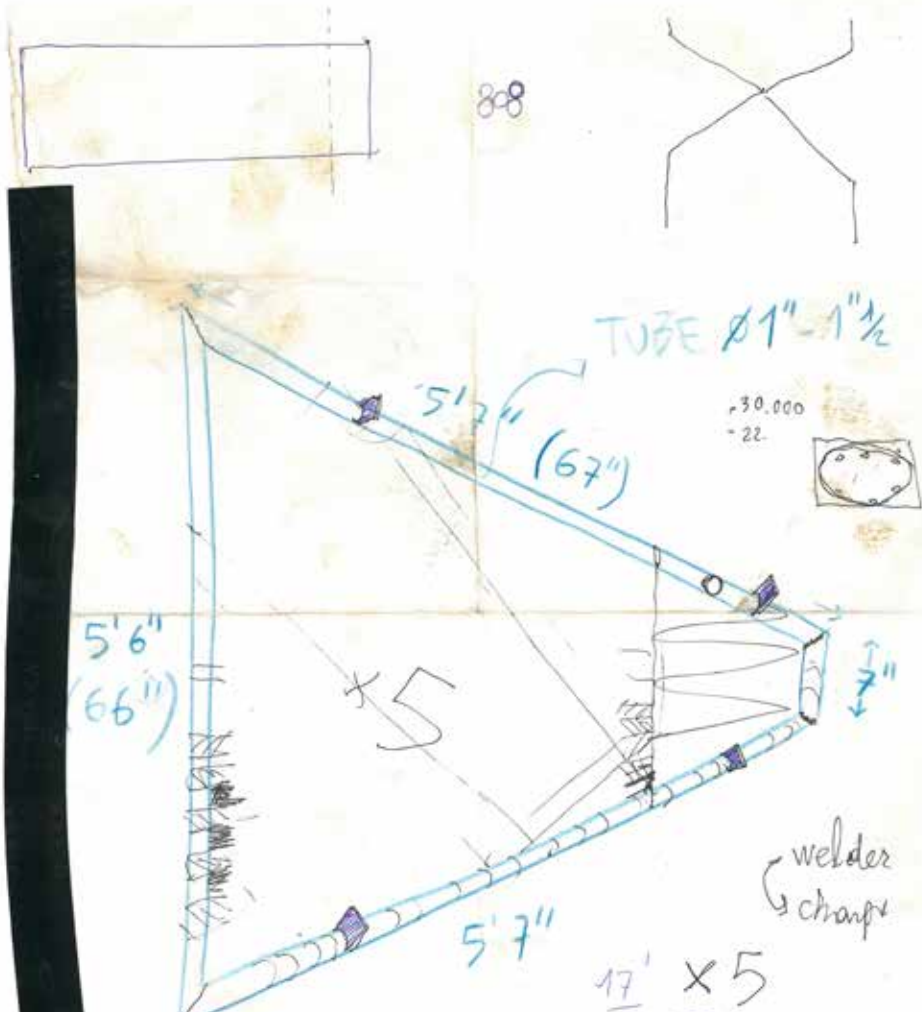
Construction Phases

- 1 Foundations: Handcrafted Concrete Benches
- 2 Structures of Bent Metal Pipe
- 3 Reused Tires Joints
- 4 Charpai Canopy









- Mañana necesitamos un welder - (85')
- from 13h.
  - Painters Red 13h.
  - 10 - 77h chapay.
- 



# pakistan chowk

In *Inteligencias Colectivas*, our final aim is to understand “tactical urbanisms” around the world as intelligent emergent city-living-making and to uncover human creativity as evidences of local culture, concerns and political situations. If we can document, share and implement such knowledge and hybridize it with scientific city-development, we will be able to ensure decent, healthy and safe living conditions in more liveable and grassroots planned urban environments.

We plan 21st century cities with citizen-curators, and this endeavour wouldn't be possible without the cooperation and support of a vast network of agents, administrations, cultural and social entities.

“We know that urban spaces, arts and cultural nexus and organizations are what make our neighborhoods livable, walkable, and vibrant.”

*Marvi Mazhar*





# From Then to Now... an ongoing initiative

*Architecture starts with desire on the part of its makers, whether for security, or grandeur, or shelter, or rootedness. Built, it influences the emotions of those who experience and use it, whose desires continue to shape and change it. Desire and emotion are overlapping concepts, but if 'desire' is active, directed towards real and imagined ends, and if 'emotion' implies greater passivity, describing the ways in which we are moved, architecture is engaged with both. Buildings are intermediaries in the reciprocation between the hopes and intentions of people, in the present and the past. They are the mineral interval between the thoughts and actions that make them and the thoughts and actions that inhabit them. Heritage is knowledge. Architecture is Life.*

In the fast growing cities of developing countries most parks have been reduced or even been replaced by buildings. This reflects callous disregard for health and recreation of the citizens. Moreover the parks have been stratified according to socio-economic status of the urban dwellers with very little consideration to the recreational needs of the low-income urban lot.

Pakistan Chowk is a landmark heritage public space of Karachi. It lies in the District South, Karachi, where Strachan Road meets Aram Bagh, covering an area of 6633 sq.ft. approximately. The Chowk is surrounded mostly by pre-partition buildings, few new developments, famous educational buildings and restaurants. The Chowk and its surrounding dust covered buildings tell the story of the journey of the city of Karachi into decay and dearth of aesthetics.

Historically, the Rambagh Quarters' (now known as Arambagh Quarters) importance arises from the water tanks (talao) and innumerable wells that once occupied a large area and were the initial water source to the Artillery and others.

Pakistan Chowk was formerly called the educational heart of Karachi. It was from here that the Sindh College Association and D.J Science College began to operate. It also promoted tourist activities and housed the busiest taxi and Victoria Station in the city, known as the Purana Tonga Stand.

The basic vision was to rehabilitate the Chowk back to its glory, to revive the concept of Public Square free of any commercial hoardings, redundant wires, and through the tool of design, develop the space. The aim of the rehabilitation was not beautification, but rather making it a sustainable and adaptable space for the neighborhood and the local stakeholders in three phases.

- Phase 1: analytical study and oral history of the space and its inhabitants and development of associations through dialogues with stakeholders, also known as Mohalla Baazi
- Phase 2: designing and implementation of interventions at the Chowk
- Phase 3: dealing with the issues at urban level with the help of local stakeholders and establishing a Cultural Art Center in Old Downtown



## Design Intervention and Process

The Chowk was previously surrounded by a solid wall. There was no vertical access to the platform and the Chowk had turned into the largest public bathroom and dump in the neighborhood, populated by homeless and drug addicts.

The interventions carried out at the Chowk include the installation of 32 benches with names of Karachiites who worked towards civic engagement, plantation of 18 lignum trees around the Chowk, massive cleaning of the area, installation of lamp posts, dustbins, a history board and an installation by German-Spanish design team zoohaus. From the largest garbage collection platform to now an Urban Cultural Hub, we designed the space keeping the relevance and importance of its surrounding context.

The immediate context of Pakistan Chowk and architectural influences of the area have been well documented through Condition Survey Report (CSR), Cultural Mapping and Oral History documentation, and an anthropological study of the local immigrant community is in its process.

In the frame of “Urbanities – art and public space in Pakistan”, the German-Spanish architecture collective zoohaus/Inteligencias Colectivas carried out an investigative and constructive research of urban informal design practices and collective technologies.

The outcomes were realized in collaboration with Marvi Mazhar & Associates for the use of the community at Pakistan Chowk, where an outdoor space with red frames was designed with truck artists and welders. Through intelligent design intervention and scale, the space became a popular node for the locals.

Today, the space is inhabited by artists who come on Sundays to paint, sketch and teach – an informal Art Center has been established by senior artists, and we have hosted several cultural events like theatre, music, storytelling sessions, readings and art performances.

The intention to go to a place creates historical time: the place is a goal in the future. The future cannot, however be left open and undefined. It is an ongoing dialogue. What is a place? What gives a place its identity, its aura? Preparing an up to date assessment of the constitution of Public Space may seem an impossible undertaking since public space takes diverse shapes and faces increasingly multifaceted and complex demands. Many towns and cities, however, now recognize the importance of public spaces, which, alongside the major places of interest, form the bond that holds together a city's landscape.

**Marvi Mazhar**, Heritage Consultant, principal architect Marvi Mazhar & Associates, Founder & Creative Head Pakistan Chowk Community Centre





















# guilds&markets [humannetwork]

We understand “human network” as an active knowledge network of persons and collectives that becomes essential to get into specific and inaccessible qualitative space design. In this case the act of building a 3x6x4 meter structure becomes an epic action that involves more than 30 people.

For this project, Karachi, the mega-creative city of makers, brought the guilds of Charpai, Truck Art, Masonry and Motorcycle Decoration together with Marvi Mazhar’s Architecture Office (Ali Raza), the curator Sara-Duana Meyer and the team of Inteligencias Colectivas to design and build “Jugaad”, a playful urban installation on Pakistan Chowk in the heart of the city. While this research and project is mainly geared towards amateur builders, it aspires to be something greater: to encourage and cultivate citizen science.







## Acknowledgments

In the process of **IC Karachi** particularly noteworthy is the commitment of Sara-Duana Meyer and Stefan Winkler as initiators and curators of “**Urbanities – art and public space in Pakistan**”. Equally remarkable is the participation of initiatives like “Pakistan Chowk”, represented by Marvi Mazhar or the “Vasl Artists’ Collective” created and supported by Adeela Suleman and Naila Mahmood. We also want to express an immense gratitude for the ones who showed us the “real” Karachi and their streets: Ali Raza, Zoya Ahmed, Huma Tassarwar, Shahana Rajani, Madeeha Syed, Basil Andrews, etc.

This network pushed the limits of **Inteligencias Colectivas** and enabled the development of new environments in a more sustainable, creative and common sense way.

**Inteligencias Colectivas [karachi]** took place as an an investigative and constructive research by zoohaus in the framework of **Urbanities – art and public space in Pakistan**.

**Urbanities – art and public space in Pakistan** is a critical exploration of the urban, its complexities and possibilities under the premise of individual artistic work and research approaches. Throughout 2016, the partner project between the Goethe-Institut Pakistan and the Lahore Biennale Foundation, in collaboration with Vasl Artists’ Collective, Annemarie-Schimmel-Haus, Marvi Mazhar & Associates, and other partners, incited discursive and artistic contributions related to Pakistan’s controversial and contested urban space. By recollecting Henri Lefebvre’s “right to the city” for critical discussion, the project aimed to enable a broad audience to engage with contemporary art and urban space, and to link the emerging generation of artists, curators and urban researchers in Pakistan with the scenes in Germany within the broader framework of the curatorial processes leading up to the Lahore Biennale.

The project **Urbanities – art and public space in Pakistan** was conceived by Stefan Winkler, Goethe-Institut Pakistan, and directed and co-curated by Sara-Duana Meyer.

## Photo credits

Amna Abdullah and zoohaus

Marvi Mazhar & Associates  
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